

# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



Jewel Mullen, M.D., M.P.H., M.P.A.  
Commissioner

Dannel P. Malloy  
Governor  
Nancy Wyman  
Lt. Governor

### Office of the Commissioner

March 25, 2015

#### Connecticut Providers and Hospitals:

This letter is an update regarding the "Status: Stage 1," as set forth in the State of Connecticut, Department of Public Health ("DPH") letter, dated July 7, 2014.

DPH remains committed to helping Connecticut health care providers and hospitals achieve meaningful use, as defined by the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act ("HITECH"). HITECH authorizes the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services ("CMS") to make incentive payments to eligible professionals and eligible hospitals who can demonstrate "meaningful use" of certified electronic health records technology ("CEHRT") to achieve health and efficiency goals. There are three meaningful use stages.

In Stage 1, the final rule requires eligible professionals and eligible hospitals to choose at least one public health objective from the set of menu objectives. The meaningful use public health objectives are the electronic submission of immunization registry, syndromic surveillance or, for eligible hospitals only, reportable laboratory result data.

In Connecticut, DPH is the entity that receives immunization, syndromic surveillance and reportable laboratory result data. DPH has been actively working with eligible professionals and eligible hospitals to help them meet the required public health objectives in order to qualify for meaningful use incentives. In connection with that work, DPH developed the meaningful use test ("MUST") portal for immunization registry data as the vehicle through which eligible professionals and eligible hospitals can conduct meaningful use testing.

Although the MUST portal was operationalized during calendar year 2014, it experienced periodic functionality issues. As a result, and due to all the changes in the hosting environment, DPH did not consistently have the capacity to electronically receive Stage 1 immunization test data during 2014. In addition, DPH did not have the resources to build any capacity to receive syndromic surveillance or reportable laboratory result test data from electronic health records



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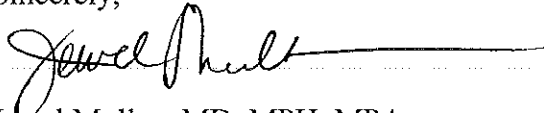
## Meaningful Use Exclusion

during calendar year 2014. Consequently, DPH has chosen to allow eligible professionals and eligible hospitals to claim an exclusion to the Stage 1 public health meaningful use measures for immunizations, syndromic surveillance and, for eligible hospitals, reportable laboratory results. This exclusion is only for the period of January 2014 to December 2014 for eligible providers and the period of October 2013 to September 2014 for eligible hospitals. It is expected that all eligible providers will attest using the DPH immunization MUST portal beginning January 1, 2015 and ongoing.

Eligible professionals and eligible hospitals should save this letter and use it when attesting to meaningful use through the CMS Registration & Attestation system or Connecticut's Medical Assistance Provider Incentive Repository (MAPIR) for meaningful use payments, under the Medicare and Medicaid EHR Incentive programs, respectively.

For assistance with the Connecticut Medicaid EHR Incentive Program application process, providers may call the state's toll free help line at 1-855-313-6638.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jewel Mullen", followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Jewel Mullen, MD, MPH, MPA  
Commissioner